

## **VIRGINIA DIVISION OF CONSOLIDATED LABORATORY SERVICES**

### **NOTICE OF COVID-19-RELATED REMOTE ASSESSMENTS**

**July 22, 2020**

**Revised August 11, 2021**

**Revised October 25, 2022**

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has prompted the need for the availability of an alternate approach to performing onsite laboratory assessments to ensure the safety of the assessed laboratory's staff and accreditation body's staff. Additionally, circumstances require planning for navigation through potential seasonal or variant-induced changes in the prevalence, virulence, or health impacts of COVID-19.

Routine laboratory assessments will be conducted by the Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS) either in-person or remotely, or by using an approach that minimizes the on-site time using a combination of in-person and remote assessment protocols. The determination of when remote assessments will be used includes a risk-based evaluation process and takes into account [CDC's COVID-19 Community Levels](#).

Fully remote and partially remote procedures include a thorough pre-assessment data package review and interviews done by video conferencing. These procedures are applicable to assessments of laboratories accredited under 1VAC30-46 or certified under 1VAC30-41, 1VAC30-45, or the Tuning Fork Protocol.

Efforts will be made to avoid two consecutive remote assessments. Should circumstances cause two consecutive remote assessments, laboratory staff should expect a brief supplemental on-site visit at a later date, which will be announced to the laboratory in advance.

Plans for in-person or remote assessments will be discussed at the time the assessment is scheduled and are subject to change. Every effort will be made to keep laboratory staff promptly informed of scheduling changes.

Additional information on VELAP's use of remote assessments is available on the VELAP webpage ([www.dgs.virginia.gov/dcls](http://www.dgs.virginia.gov/dcls)) under the heading "[COVID-19 Response](#)".

Questions regarding this matter may be directed to [Lab\\_Cert@dgs.virginia.gov](mailto:Lab_Cert@dgs.virginia.gov).